

BOARD MINUTES  
WISCONSIN BOARD OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
Meeting of February 15, 2016  
Chippewa Falls, WI

**Board Members**

John Gaedke, Chair  
Larry Kutschma, Vice Chair  
Dan Bohlin, Secretary (excused)  
John Townsend  
Al Richards  
Leigh Neville-Neil (excused)  
Cathy Gorst  
Kevin Nicholson (excused)  
Carl Krueger

**Others Present (not all inclusive)**

David Schmidt, COVP Chair  
Dave Zien, Former State Senator

**WDVA Present**

Kathy Marschman, Deputy Secretary  
Dan Buttery, Asst. Deputy Secretary  
Randy Nitschke, Homes Administrator  
Ken Grant, Division Administrator  
Mark Wilson, Commandant  
Kent Falstad, VHRP  
Nicole Lillis, VHRP  
Karla Peterson, VORP  
Angie Reindl, Executive Staff Assistant

1. **Call to order and roll call**

The meeting of the Board of Veterans Affairs was called to at order by the Chair. Roll was taken and a quorum was present. The pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was observed for POWs and fallen comrades.

2. **Briefing by Chippewa Falls Commandant**

The Chair introduced Mark Wilson, the Commandant of the Wisconsin Veterans Home at Chippewa Falls. Mr. Wilson shared current information regarding the Wisconsin Veterans Home at Chippewa Falls.

- Opened in 2013
- 72 bed facility with 4 ea. 18 unit wings
- Residents must require 24 hour skilled nursing care
- Dimensions Healthcare contract staff
- 290 applications on file
- 90 applicants actively waiting for admission

3. Certification of notice of meeting

Proper notification of the meeting occurred.

4. Board action on minutes from Board's November 20, 2015 meeting at WDVA in Union Grove

It was moved, seconded, and carried unanimously on a voice vote to approve the minutes for the meeting held on November 20, 2015 in Union Grove with the changes requested by Board Member Dan Bohlin, Board Secretary.

5. Chairs Comments

Chairman Gaedke thanked former Chair, John Townsend, for his contributions as the Chair and as a member of the Board. Chairman Gaedke expressed that he accepted a position on the board, so that he can work to help Wisconsin veterans. He expressed that helping people makes him feel good, and he hopes the other board members feel the same.

6. VORP Briefing

WDVA staff member Nicole Lillis provided information on the Veterans Outreach and Recovery Program (VORP) (details in Attachment 1).

7. VHRP Briefing

WDVA staff member Kent Falstad provided information on the Veterans Housing and Recovery Program (VHRP) (details in Attachment 2).

8. STAR Briefing

Overview and status of the new State Transforming Agency Resources (STAR) provided by WDVA Deputy Secretary Kathy Marschman (details in Attachment 3).

9. Secretary's Comments

WDVA Highlights provided by WDVA Deputy Secretary Kathy Marschman (details in Attachment 4).

Legislative updates provided by WDVA Assistant Deputy Secretary Dan Buttery (details in Attachment 5).

Information was shared on how board members can get notified of veteran related legislation. Board members were encouraged to contact Roger Fetterly, MOAA representative for the Council on Veterans Programs, to obtain additional information on getting "plugged in" to upcoming veterans legislation.

In closing, Deputy Secretary Marschman added that the legislative language that was proposed to help improve the financial status of the department did not make it through the legislative process. The department has been informed that they should not expect to receive any GPR funding, through the next budget cycle, so they have to solely rely on the Veterans Trust Fund, which is a finite amount.

10. Public Comment

Former state Senator Dave spoke about the possibility of reintroducing legislation that would send a percentage of the taxes from mineral sales in the state of Wisconsin to the Veterans Trust Fund. He also spoke about events related to the 50 Anniversary of the War Vietnam.

David Schmidt shared that sale of any land that is used for mining frac sand is not subject to sales or use taxes. He shared that this was brought up by a member of the COVP, and they plan to put together a resolution suggesting that we look into this as a potential source of funding for the Veterans Trust Fund.

11. Adjournment

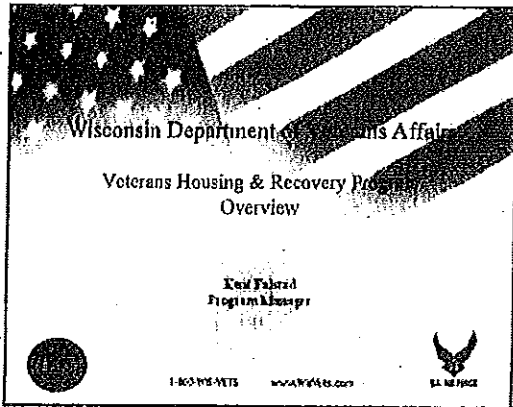
A motion was made by Mr. Kutschma to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and carried on a voice vote.

John Gaedke  
Chair

ATTACHMENTS:

1. VORP Briefing
2. VHRP Briefing
3. STAR Briefing
4. WDVA Highlights
5. Legislative Update

2/12/2016



Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs  
 Veterans Housing & Recovery Program  
 Overview

Ken Fabrad  
 Program Manager

1-800-546-4675 www.WVets.com VA Logo

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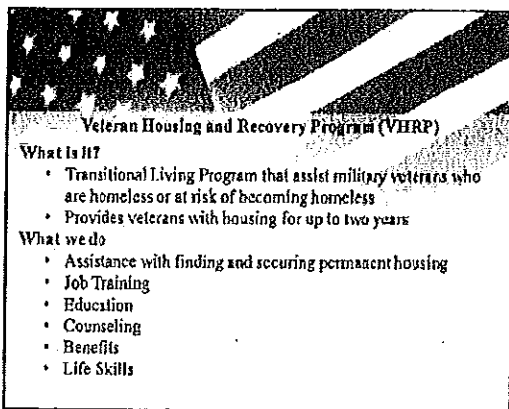
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**Veteran Housing and Recovery Program (VHRP)**

**What is it?**

- Transitional Living Program that assist military veterans who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless
- Provides veterans with housing for up to two years

**What we do**

- Assistance with finding and securing permanent housing
- Job Training
- Education
- Counseling
- Benefits
- Life Skills

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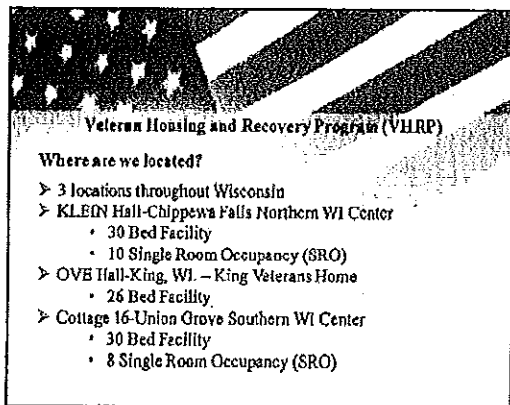
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**Veteran Housing and Recovery Program (VHRP)**

**Where are we located?**

- > 3 locations throughout Wisconsin
- > KLEIN Hall-Chippewa Falls Northern WI Center
  - 30 Bed Facility
  - 10 Single Room Occupancy (SRO)
- > OVB Hall-King, WI. – King Veterans Home
  - 26 Bed Facility
- > Cottage 16-Union Grove Southern WI Center
  - 30 Bed Facility
  - 8 Single Room Occupancy (SRO)

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### Where are the Housing Programs Located? What is a Veteran Housing Program Like?

Veteran Housing Programs are located at:

- Chippewa Falls in Chippewa County
- King in Waupaca County
- Union Grove in Racine County

Each housing program offers clean, safe, and secure accommodations. There is a full meal plan available. The program's staff members are highly trained professionals who are dedicated to serving veterans and provide the veteran with ongoing support.

All veterans have work responsibilities while residing in one of the housing program locations. Veterans will often work together to maintain the center. This discipline and hard work serves to restore each veteran's pride, confidence, and self-esteem.

A transitional program participant may also earn money while in the program that will be placed in their savings account. These earnings may be used to obtain other housing options after the veteran completes the program.

Veterans may be assessed a program fee of up to 30% of their gross income.

*"What lies behind us, and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us."*

### How Does a Veteran Apply for Admission to the VHRP?

Veterans who wish to apply for the VHRP or need more information can contact:

- Veterans Assistance Foundation, Wisconsin Programs.  
www.Varvets.org  
(608) 372-VETS (8387) or  
1-866-823-VETS (8387)
- A County Veteran's Service Office (listed in the telephone book under "County Government" or the WDVA website at [www.WisVets.com/CVSO](http://www.WisVets.com/CVSO))
- Wisconsin Dept. of Veterans Affairs  
1-800-WIS-VETS (947-8387) or  
Email [VHP@dva.wisconsin.gov](mailto:VHP@dva.wisconsin.gov)

When administering or determining eligibility for benefits offered to veterans by the state of Wisconsin, WDVA does not discriminate against persons, or harass them, because of their race, creed, color, national origin or ancestry, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, political affiliation or beliefs, or arrest or conviction record. The Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs is an Equal Opportunity Lender. The Department is also a Fair Housing Lender

Wisconsin Dept. of Veterans Affairs  
P.O. Box 7843

201 West Washington Avenue  
Madison, WI 53707-7843  
1-800-WIS-VETS (947-8387)  
[WisVets@dva.wisconsin.gov](mailto:WisVets@dva.wisconsin.gov)

WDVA B0202.(01/15)



## VETERAN HOUSING & RECOVERY PROGRAM

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Specifically designed for homeless veterans and those who are at risk of becoming homeless, including those veterans seeking other affordable housing options.

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WDVA website: [www.WisVets.com](http://www.WisVets.com)  
1-800-WIS-VETS (947-8387)

### Who is Eligible to Participate in the VHRP?

All in state and out-of-state veterans who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces are eligible. The Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs will confirm military service and eligibility.

The VHRP offers stable, secure, and safe housing to both male and female homeless veterans while they receive the training and other services necessary to become self-supporting.

The VHRP also can assist veterans who are at risk of becoming homeless and need job training and other services.

The VHRP affords veterans access to a wide array of services such as:

### What About the Veteran's Family?

Spouses and dependent children are not eligible at this time, unless the spouse is also a veteran. However, the VHRP staff will assist the veteran's family with obtaining adequate housing while the veteran is in a transitional program.

- Temporary and Permanent Housing
- Job Training
- Education
- Counseling
- Health care, including treatment of PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder)
- Treatment for alcohol or drug abuse issues
- Benefits and entitlements

A VHRP staff member along with the contractor and VA Case-workers will interview each veteran to make an assessment and determine immediate and long-term needs. Then the veteran and VHRP staff member can agree on a specific program that addresses those needs.

### How Long is the Transitional Program?

Generally, most veterans can complete their individual program in about 6-10 months. Others may complete their program in less time, but the maximum duration of the transitional program is 2 years.

Applicants who need immediate medical attention or treatment for drug/alcohol problems will receive those services as quickly as possible.

Applicants with drug or alcohol problems must first successfully complete a treatment program before they continue in the VHRP program.

Based on their housing needs, veterans may:

- Live and work at the Housing Program while they receive services offered through the VHRP.

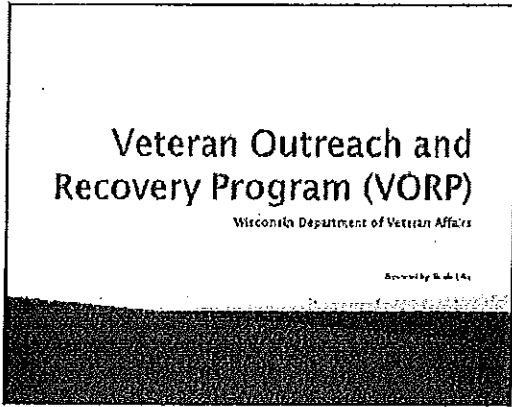
### Long Term Affordable Housing

Both Chippewa Falls and Union Grove have suites available to those veterans needing long-term affordable housing in a secure and safe environment.

This housing is open to any veteran who has completed the transitional program or who is in need of temporary or permanent housing. All veterans entering these programs must complete an application process and must have sufficient income in order to pay the monthly program fee.

*The goal of the Veterans Housing and Recovery Program is to assist military veterans who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless in obtaining temporary or permanent housing, in addition to providing other services that will enable them to reintegrate back to the community.*

2/12/2016




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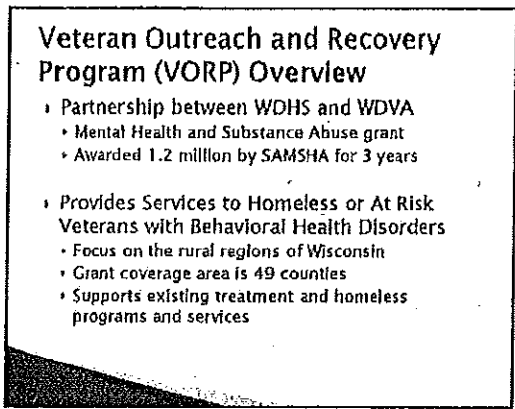
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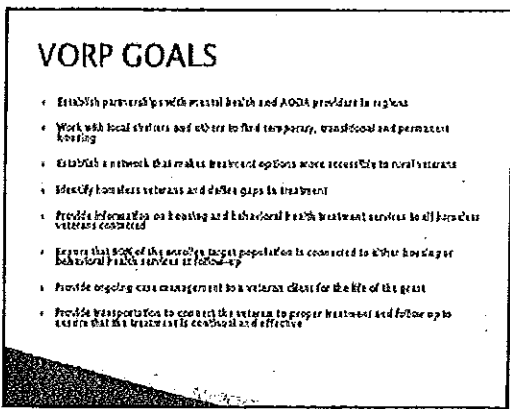
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2/12/2016

### VORP QUALIFICATIONS

› What Qualifies a Veteran for VORP?

- Being a Veteran
- Must be able to prove this by DD214
- Discharge status does not matter
- Criminal history does not matter

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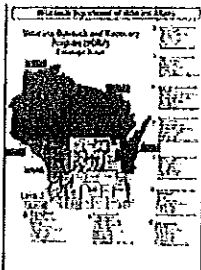
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### VORP Map with Regions



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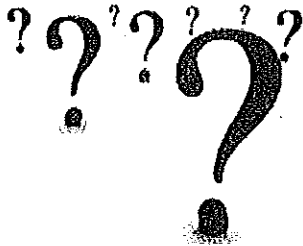
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### QUESTIONS



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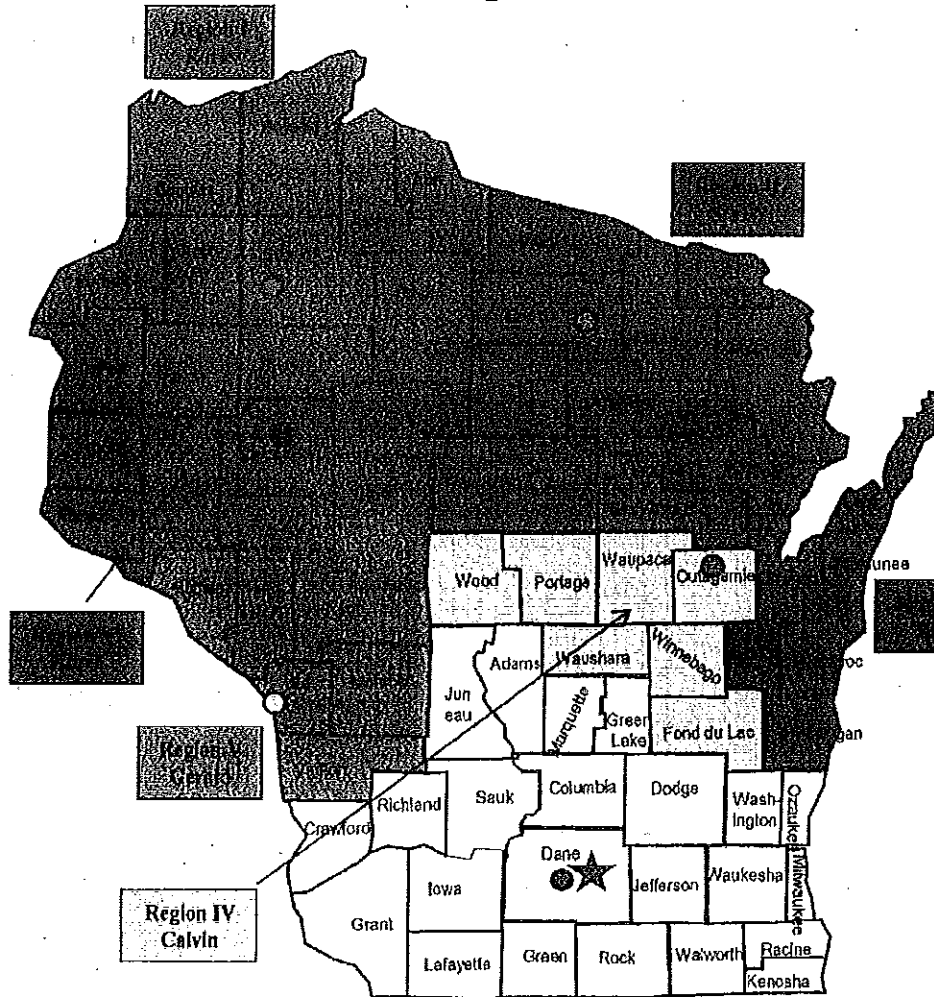
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**Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs**

**Veterans Outreach and Recovery Program (VORP) Coverage Areas**



Region I Outreach Specialist-  
Rosie M. Elliott  
15954 Rivers Edge Drive  
Room 100C  
Hayward, WI 54843  
o: 715-658-2557  
[rosie.elliott@dva.wisconsin.gov](mailto:rosie.elliott@dva.wisconsin.gov)

Region II Outreach Specialist-  
Sarah Thorsberg  
639 West Kemp  
Rhinelander, WI 54501  
o: 715-401-4821  
[sarah.thorsberg@dva.wisconsin.gov](mailto:sarah.thorsberg@dva.wisconsin.gov)

Region III Outreach Specialist-  
Brian Bilkske  
Green Bay State Office Building  
200 N Jefferson St STE 134  
Green Bay, WI 54301-5100  
o: 920-246-7277  
[brian.bilkske@dva.wisconsin.gov](mailto:brian.bilkske@dva.wisconsin.gov)

Region IV Outreach Specialist-  
Calvin Stammer  
Glen Park Apartments  
2919 W Glenpark Dr  
Appleton, WI 54914-1573  
o: 608-381-0807  
[calvin.stammer@dva.wisconsin.gov](mailto:calvin.stammer@dva.wisconsin.gov)

Region V Outreach Specialist-  
Gerald A. Staren  
Red Cross Building  
2927 Losey Blvd S  
LaCrosse, WI 54601-7343  
o: 608-881-9116  
[gerald.staren@dva.wisconsin.gov](mailto:gerald.staren@dva.wisconsin.gov)

Region VI Outreach Specialist-  
Karla Peterson  
Klein Hall  
2820 E. Park Ave.  
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729-3598  
o: 715-726-2551  
c: 608-381-1525  
[karla.peterson@dva.wisconsin.gov](mailto:karla.peterson@dva.wisconsin.gov)

★ Program Manager-  
Nicole Lillis  
Chippewa Falls Office:  
Klein Hall  
2820 E. Park Ave.  
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729-3598  
o: 715-726-2545  
c: 608-418-9347  
[nicole.lillis@dva.wisconsin.gov](mailto:nicole.lillis@dva.wisconsin.gov)

● Program Associate-  
Tina M. Vagedes  
Madison Central Office  
201 W. Washington Ave.  
P.O. Box 7843  
Madison, WI 53707-7843  
o: 608-267-0783  
c: 608-669-5524  
[tina.vagedes@dva.wisconsin.gov](mailto:tina.vagedes@dva.wisconsin.gov)

● SOAR Specialist-  
Randy Hahn  
Wausau Chapter Office  
1602 N. 2nd Street  
Wausau, WI 54403-3401  
o: 715-409-3767  
[randy.hahn@dva.wisconsin.gov](mailto:randy.hahn@dva.wisconsin.gov)

# Veterans Outreach and Recovery Program

## Recovery is Possible.

Recovery from mental health and substance use concerns is a process. The Veterans Outreach and Recovery Program (VORP) is designed to help veterans and former service members start this journey.

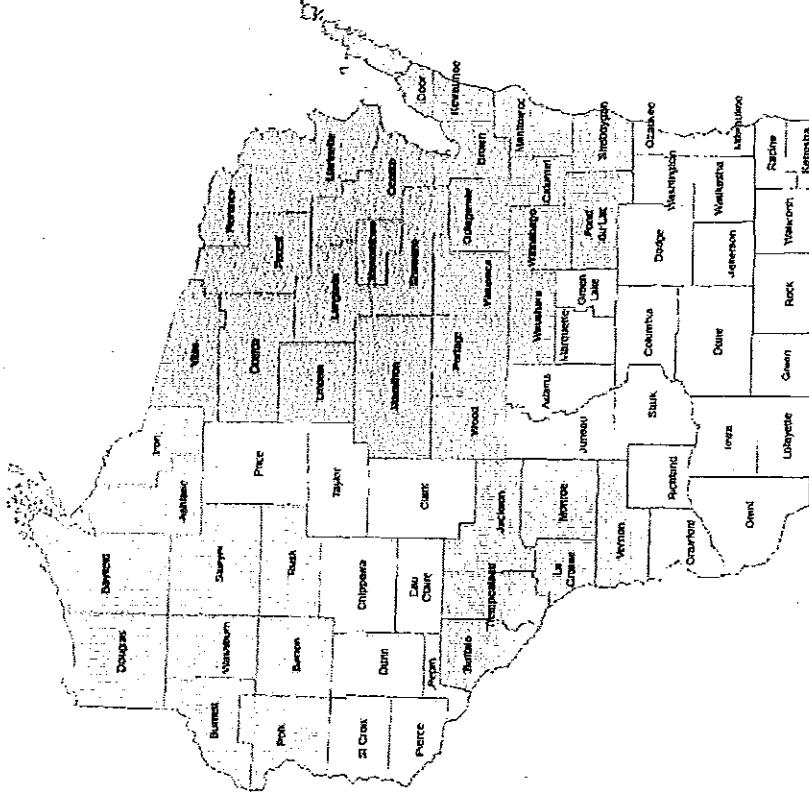
## Who is Eligible?

Assistance is available to homeless veterans and former service members regardless of discharge status who have a mental health and/or substance use concern. Veterans or former service members with these conditions at-risk for homelessness may also qualify. The enrollment process includes a screening for needs.

## Support is Available.

Program staff work with mental health and substance use services professionals to provide behavioral health support services needed to address mental health or substance use and to place veterans on a path to obtain stable housing.

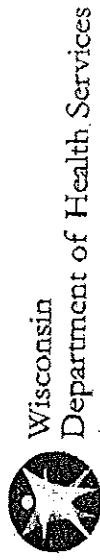
# Available in 49 Counties



To learn more, contact an Outreach and Recovery Specialist:

Region I	-	(715) 558-2557
Region II	-	(715) 401-4821
Region III	-	(920) 246-7277
Region IV	-	(608) 381-0907
Region V	-	(608) 881-9116
Region VI	-	(608) 381-1525

VORP is a federally funded project of the State of Wisconsin.



# Veterans Outreach and Recovery Program

**Focus on Success.** Outreach and Recovery Specialists work with veterans and former service members enrolled in the program to support their health, home, purpose, and community.

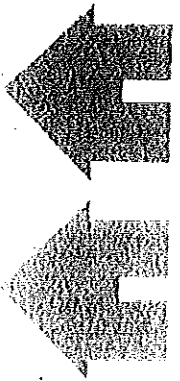
This support includes:

**Health** - Assistance in overcoming and managing disease and symptoms and making choices that support physical and emotional well-being.

**Home** - Assistance in having a stable and safe place to live.

**Purpose** - Assistance in conducting meaningful daily activities, such as a job, family caretaking, or creative endeavors, and the independence, income, and resources to participate in society.

**Community** - Assistance in building relationships and social networks that provide support, friendship, love, and hope.

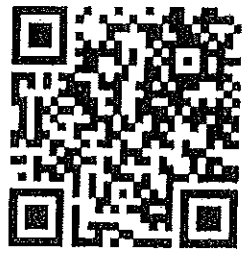


Veterans Outreach and Recovery Program (VORP)

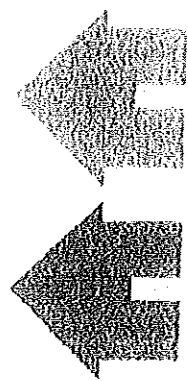
## Support for Homeless Veterans with Behavioral Health Needs

Wisconsin Department of Health Services  
Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs

For more information, scan this code:



P-01133 (01/2016)



## STAR PROJECT OVERVIEW

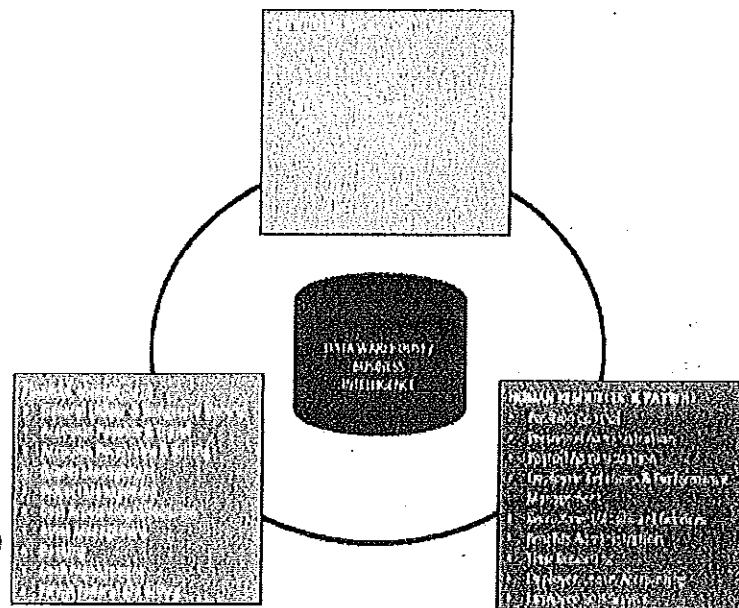
### State Transforming Agency Resources

**PURPOSE:** Connect the State's 120+ IT software systems into one, comprehensive system, to increase efficiency and reduce systems-related costs across State agencies

**OBJECTIVE:** Consolidate multiple outdated human resource, procurement and financial business systems into one efficient, transparent, and modern, enterprise-wide system to meet state government business needs

**STAR SCOPE:** What does it encompass?

- PeopleSoft:
  - Finance
  - Procurement
  - Human Resources/  
Payroll
- Hyperlon:
  - Budget
- Oracle:
  - Business Intelligence



#### STAR GOALS:

- Enable workforce and operational effectiveness and efficiency through standardized processes and analytics
- Identify and resolve work processes, materials and systems for alternatives to using personally identifying information, such as SSN for travel expenses
- Reduce or eliminate paper
- Empower workforce by streamlining approval processes and pushing decision making to the appropriate level
- Improve transparency
- Reduce long-term business costs

#### IMPACT ON BOARD/COUNCIL MEMBERS:

- Board/Council Members may need to provide additional information for one-time set-up in STAR.
- After a Board/Council member is set-up in the system, they will only need to provide standard information for reimbursement (mileage, meals, etc.)



# Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs Direct Effect on Veterans By the Numbers

## CLAIMS

The WDVA Claims Office assists Wisconsin veterans and their dependents with federal claims for VA compensation, pension, education, medical care, and death benefits.

Total Economic Impact  
of All Benefits  
for Wisconsin Veterans  
Fiscal Year 2014-2015  
**\$413,154,442**

USDVA Claims Completed for Wisconsin Veterans  
in 2015 = **9042**

USDVA Claims Completed for Wisconsin Veterans  
by the WDVA in 2015 = **4509 or 50%**

Claims Completed for Wisconsin Veterans  
by all 60 other Powers of Attorney = **50%**

## ELIGIBILITY

The Division of Veterans Services eligibility unit determines eligibility and also certifies veteran status for other state agencies providing benefits for veterans.

**17,347**  
Applications Processed  
in Fiscal Year 2015

To qualify for most Wisconsin state veterans' benefits, programs, or services, a veteran must first establish general eligibility for Wisconsin state veterans' benefits.

### Top 3:

- Chapter 45 Eligibility Determination
- Veteran Identifier for Wisconsin Driver License
- Wisconsin GI Bill

Average Application Processing Time:

Fiscal Year 2013  
**6-8 weeks**

Fiscal Year 2016  
**< 1 week**

# VBRC

The Veterans Benefits Resource Center (VBRC) provides veterans improved access to information about the Department's programs, benefits and services. Through the VBRC, we ensure that veterans who call during business hours will be able to immediately speak to Center Support Staff who are trained to provide the most frequently requested information, as well as ensuring that veterans' requests are tracked and managed from initial request through resolution.



**36,081** by Phone, Online Chat, Email,  
**Inquiries** Mail or Walk-In in FY 2015

### Top 3:

- Veteran Identifier for Wisconsin Driver License
- General Information
- Wisconsin GI Bill

### 2015 Customer Survey Results

**93-95%** of all Customers were VERY SATISFIED with VBRC staff in the following areas:

- Timely responses
- Attentive to questions
- Communicated clearly
- Courteous, respectful, professional
- Provided resolution to issue
- Helpfulness

### HOMES

Total number  
of referrals = **1,122**

**53%**  
from other

**31%**  
from Hospital

**13%**  
from other  
skilled nursing

**2%**  
from CVSO

State of Wisconsin  
Legislative Update for Veteran Bills

1. SB 575 cleared the Senate 32-0 on 9 Feb 16. Assembly bill for vote on Tuesday 16 Feb.
  - a. Official logotypes for Wisconsin veteran-owned businesses and disabled veteran-owned businesses.
2. SB 418 cleared the Senate 32-0 on 9 Feb 16. Assembly bill for vote on Tuesday 16 Feb.
  - a. Nonprofit organization grant program administered by the WDVA.
3. SB 419 cleared the Senate 32-0 on 9 Feb 16. Assembly bill for vote on Tuesday 16 Feb.
  - a. Veteran employment and entrepreneurship grant program, veteran employment grants, granting rule-making authority to WDVA
4. SB 518 to be voted on in Executive Hearing committee Wednesday, 17 Feb.
  - a. No next of kin unclaimed cremains of veterans and their dependents